



**LISBON
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Quantitative and qualitative evidences for better gender-based prevention of adolescent addictive behaviors, with and without substance

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The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

INTRODUCTION

- Alcohol and other drug use in adolescents has been an enormous social and public health concern for decades, at a Spanish national level as well as at a European level.
- The latest National Survey on Drug Use in Secondary School students in Spain [ESTUDES 2016–2017] shows **evidence pointing to gender differences in consumption trends**: girls have the largest percentage of legal drugs use, while illegal drugs are used mainly by boys.
- Thus, the Spanish National Strategy on Addictions 2017-2024 emphasizes the need to adopt a **transversal gender approach** in every work developed in the addictions field, with and without substance.

METHODS

- Our research group has been working in the addictions field for more than 20 years, mainly in adolescents from Galicia, the North West region of Spain.
- This study aimed to **track Galician adolescent population trends in prevalence of use and at-risk uses**, as well as to inform about the **male-female differences**. The present work provided a **gender-based comparison** of the results from the last four tracking surveys.



Selective methodology: a survey of Spanish Secondary students aged between **12 and 18** (2016-2019).

Convenience sampling

2016	2017	2018	2019	accumulated sample
$n_1 = 3,882$	$n_2 = 3,338$	$n_3 = 1,426$	$n_4 = 3,946$	12,952

METHODS

2016 - 2019

Ad hoc questionnaire



Screening tests for risky uses

- Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test [AUDIT]
- Substance Abuse Screening Test [CRAFFT]
- Cannabis Abuse Screening Test [CAST]
- Problematic Internet Use in adolescents [PIUS-a]

Consumption habits for alcohol and other drugs

- National Survey on Drug Use in Secondary School students in Spain [ESTUDES]
- European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs [ESPAD]

- Data were collected in their own classrooms through a self-administered paper-and-pencil questionnaire, in small groups.
- Consent and cooperation from both the school leadership and respective parents' associations.
- The Bioethics Committee of the Universidade de Santiago de Compostela approved each study.



METHODS

2019

Ad hoc questionnaire

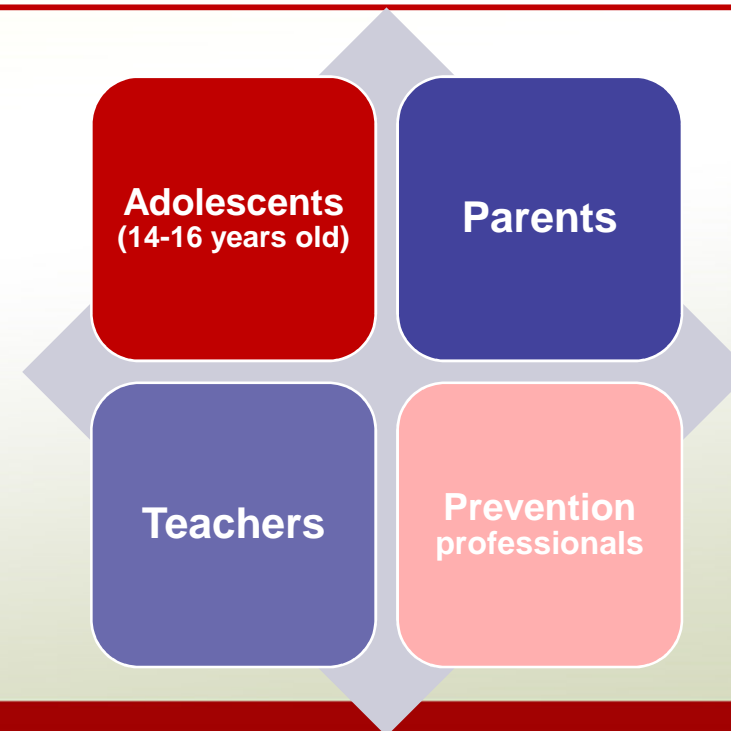
Screening tests for risky uses

- (+) Game Addiction Scale for Adolescents (GASA)
- (+) Brief Adolescent Gambling Screen (BAGS)

(+) Beliefs and expectations of using alcohol

(+) Leisure and free time activities

Moreover, quantitative data was complemented by **qualitative information** extracted from **four focus groups** (6-8 participants) with the intention of identifying **possible keys to improving prevention work**



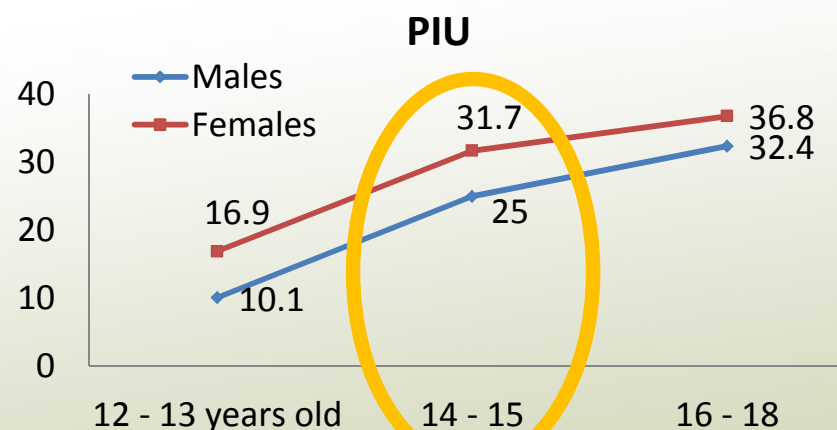
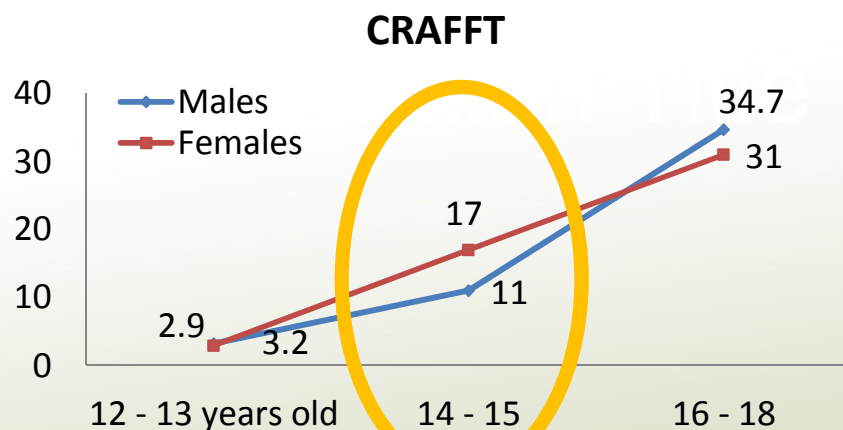
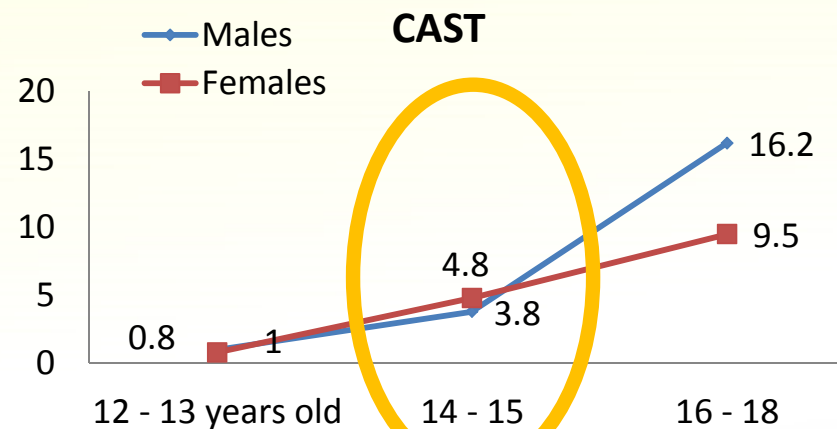
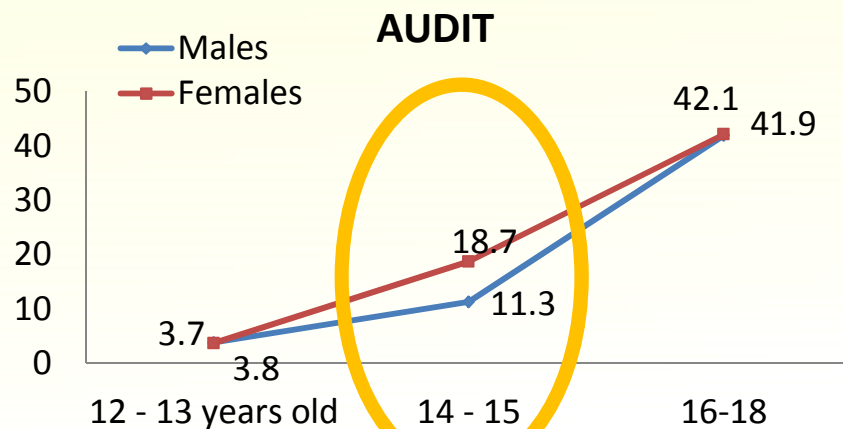
RESULTS: SUBSTANCES USED IN THE LAST 30 DAYS AND AT-RISK USE

	2016		2017		2018		2019	
	M (%)	F (%)	M (%)	F (%)	M (%)	F (%)	M (%)	F (%)
Alcohol	30.0*	34.5*	26.3*	27.6*	23.0	23.6	20.8*	22.5*
Getting drunk	11.7*	14.0*	11.6*	13.3*	10.0*	10.4*	10.5	10.9
Tobacco	14.3*	17.8*	14.7*	18.2*	10.2*	13.5*	10.4*	14.1*
Cannabis	8.6	8.2	10.2	6.7*	8.2*	5.7*	7.5*	6.0*
Cocaine	0.4	0.3	0.8*	0.4*	1.1*	0.2*	0.6*	0.2*
Hallucinogens	0.5*	0.3*	0.8*	0.4*	1.1*	0.3*	0.8*	0.2*
AUDIT +								
AUDIT +	23.1*	24.7*	24.3*	25.3*	19.9*	20.7*	20.7*	22.8*
CAST +								
CAST +	4.2*	3.4*	6.6*	4.4*	8.4*	4.8*	7.7*	5.3*
CRAFFT +								
CRAFFT +	17.2*	18.9*	20.7*	23.0*	14.9*	15.4*	17.8	18.1
PIUS-a +								
PIUS-a +	16.6*	20.4*	13.3*	18.1*	18.6*	29.9*	23.9*	29.5*
GASA +								
GASA +	-	-	-	-	-	-	28.0*	5.3*
BAGS +								
BAGS +	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.9*	0.3*

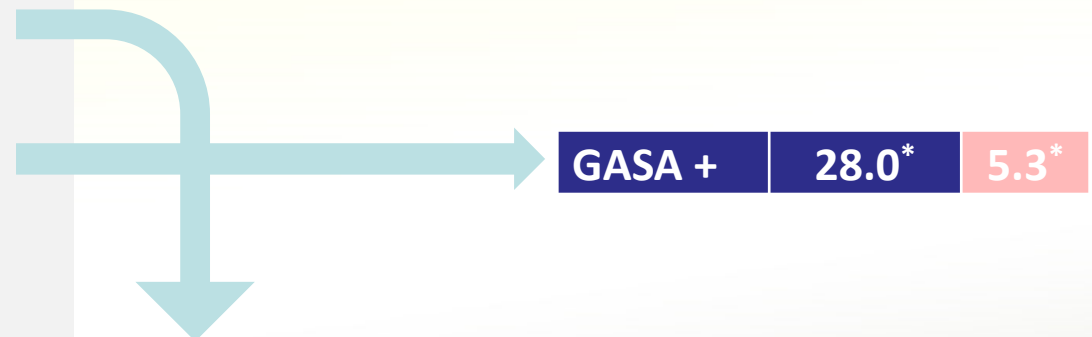
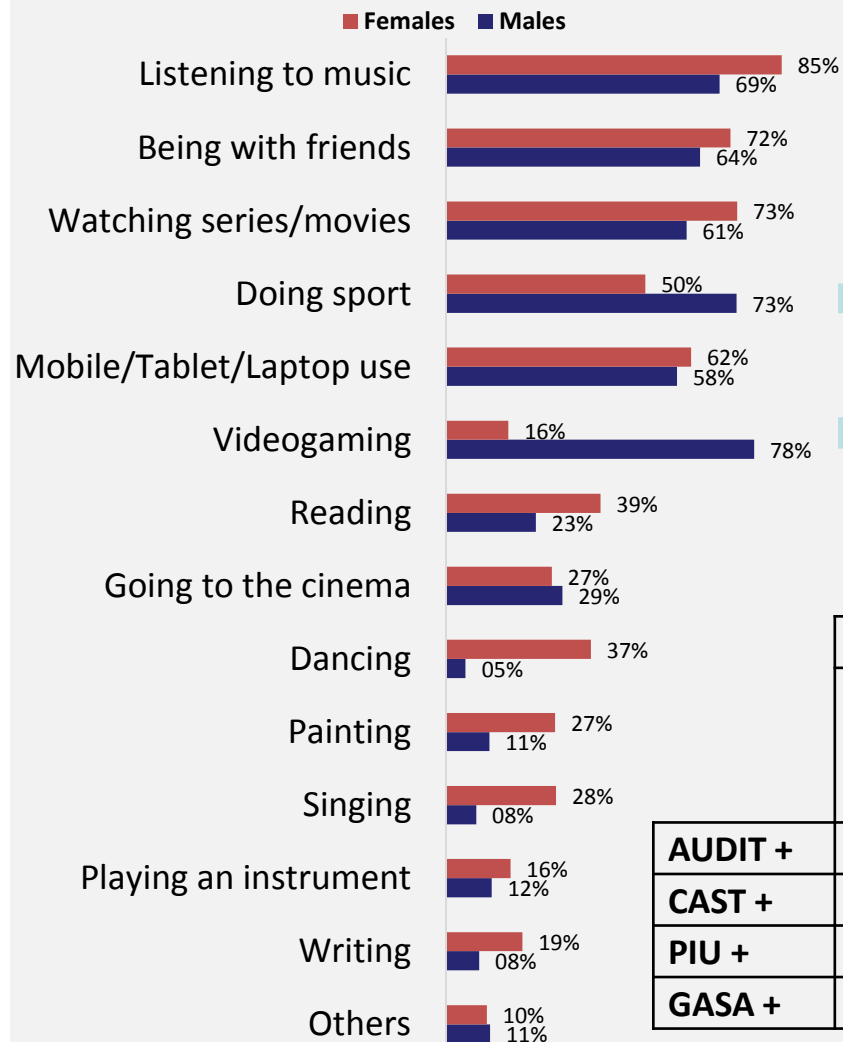
*p < .05

RESULTS:

AT-RISK USE BY GENDER AND AGE (2019)



RESULTS: LEISURE AND FREE TIME ACTIVITIES



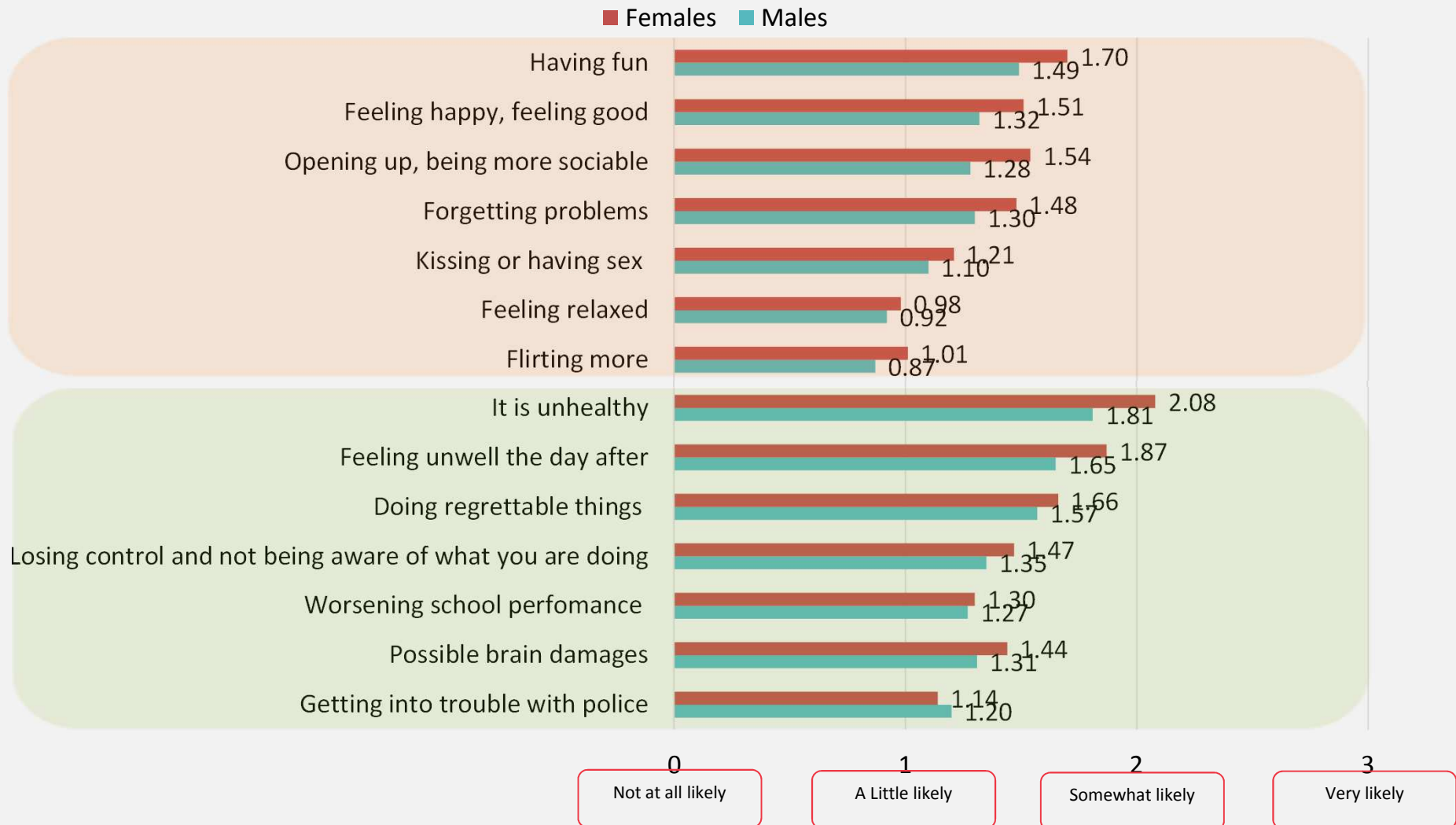
GASA + 28.0* 5.3*

	Males		Females	
	NON-FEDERATED SPORTS	FEDERATED SPORTS	NON-FEDERATED SPORTS	FEDERATED SPORTS
AUDIT +	24,9*	19,9*	28,5*	18,4*
CAST +	10,4*	6,3*	7,9*	2,5*
PIU +	24,1	23,7	32,9*	25,4*
GASA +	30,4*	27,2*	6,5*	3,7*

***p < .05**

RESULTS:

BELIEFS AND EXPECTATIONS OF USING ALCOHOL





Adolescents

Parents

Teachers

Prevention
professionals

RESULTS: QUALITATIVE STUDY

1. **Teachers and prevention professionals:** implementing a gender perspective in prevention practices is a **priority**.
2. It is essential to **understand the use in girls**, to empathize with them, to understand their motivations, beliefs, preferences, and expectations, in order **to develop specific tasks, activities, and preventive materials** focused on them.
3. It is stated that the prevention programs and materials have been developed thinking about boys (**androcentrism**).
4. **Parents** are the least sensitive group to gender differences in addictions, it goes **unnoticed by them**.
5. **Adolescents: gender stereotypes and gender roles** explain the use of legal substances by girls (alcohol and tobacco) and the illegal substances by boys (cannabis and other drugs). Moreover, boys are those who are usually dabbler drug dealers or those who get the drugs.



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